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Harris County
Public Health
Building a Healthy Community

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Harris County Public Health Awarded Health Department of the Year by
National Association of County and City Health Officials**

Harris County, Texas—Today, Harris County Public (HCPH) will be recognized at Harris County Commissioners Court for being selected as the Local Public Health Department of the Year by the [National Association of County and City Health Officials \(NACCHO\)](#). HCPH is the first public health department in the state of Texas to win the award. The Washington, DC-based organization represents nearly 3,000 local public health departments across the United States. This award recognizes and honors the outstanding accomplishments of local public health departments for their innovation, creativity, and impact in communities.

“We commend the Harris County Public Health department for their award. Public health needs to continually innovate and evolve to meet the growing health challenges of the nation,” said LaMar Hasbrouck, MD, MPH, Executive Director for NACCHO. “Harris County’s innovative practices are examples of how public health agencies need to evolve to effectively treat the most vulnerable populations while protecting the health of the community.”

The department is recognized for its public health leadership in utilizing principles of equity, innovation, and engagement in building the public health department of tomorrow. For instance, HCPH was the first governmental agency in Texas to introduce [Video Direct Observed Therapy \(VDOT\)](#) technology to its Tuberculosis (TB) Program. VDOT utilizes smartphone technology to successfully treat TB patients and has shown to reduce the stigma associated with the disease and increases medication adherence, all while being more cost-effective than traditional methods. In addition, HCPH was the first local public health department in Texas to operationally treat a TB patient internationally using VDOT. This technology enabled a TB patient to travel back to South Vietnam to visit family, yet remain compliant with the treatment regimen. Since the VDOT program was implemented, over 280 HCPH TB Program patients have benefited using smartphone technology.

“Many people do not understand TB. It is not an easy thing to explain to people,” said Martha, a patient that completed her therapy on VDOT. “VDOT allowed me to continue working and

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being involved in everyday activities without worrying of people treating me different or being fearful to be around me.”

HCPH continues to incorporate principles of innovation, technology, and engagement in building the public health of tomorrow. To learn more, visit: www.hcphtx.org.

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